

THE GLORY OF OBEDIENCE—Matt. 21 : 28-32 John 14 : 21-26

Topic, March 18

HOME READINGS

Mon.—Matt. 4 : 1-11. Life needs discipline.
Tues.—Heb. 5 : 5-9 Training thru obedience.
Wed.—John 12 : 23-26 Success thru service.
Thurs.—I Pet. 1 : 7-9 Suffering often necessary.
Fri.—Acts 6 : 5-15. Heroism is a near duty.
Sat.—Isa. 40 : 28-31. Power in steadfastness.
Sun.—Matt. 21 : 28-32, The glory of obedience.

The history of God's dealing with men is the story of his efforts to bring the will of men into harmony with his own without destroying the power of choice, i. e., the end of revelation is to cause men to love God and therefore choose to obey him.

Faith and love unite in obedience, not in the obedience of the letter but of the spirit. Love is above law, and the obedience of love seeks not to guard the washing of hands and the offering of mint and anise and cummins, but goes back of the symbol and brings forth the fruit of justice, judgment and mercy. The glory of this obedience is supreme for it makes a man godlike. More than this, obedience opens the way for greater and greater things. It is the magic wand which opens the way of the divine will. "He that willeth to do his will shall know of the teaching." (Jno 7 : 17 R. V.)

True obedience is therefore not a formal act but a condition of willingness of heart, and to the person who is thus willing to do it God reveals his will.

Henry Drummond says, "Obedience, as it is sometimes expressed, is the organ of spiritual knowledge. As the eye is the organ of physical sight; the mind of intellectual sight; so the organ of spiritual vision is this strange power, obedience. This is one of the great discoveries the Bible has made to the world. It is purely a Bible thought. Philosophy never conceived a truth so simple and yet so sublime."

This great truth, so powerful and yet so simple we are now to study. The scriptures are full of light on the subject for obedience is emphasized and explained from the beginning to the end of them. They begin with the story of the fall thru disobedience and end with restoration thru him who became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. May we in him find our type of obedience and our inspiration to loving surrender to the will of the Father in our characters and in our careers.

THE GLORY OF OBEDIENCE

- 1 Develop a definition for true obedience from John 7 : 17; II Cor. 3 : 6; Gal. 5 : 6; John 8 : 29
- 2 Obedience better than sacrifice, I Sam. 15 : 22, better than ordinances, I Cor. 7 : 19, and better than mere profession, Matt. 7 : 21.
- 3 The fruit of obedience: Salvation, Heb. 5 : 9, which means eternal life. John 12 : 50 Growth in grace, I Pet. 1 : 22 Effective testimony, Rom. 16 : 19 Proof of love, John 14 : 21; II John 6; John 15 : 4. A means of abiding, John 15 : 10. All things for good, Rom. 8 : 28 The indwelling Spirit, Acts 5 : 32. Assurance, I John 2 : 4-6.
- 4 The attitude of the obedient toward God, Acts 5 : 29; toward the gospel, II Thess. 1 : 8; I Pet. 4 : 17; and toward doctrine, Rom. 6 : 17; Matt. 28 : 19-20.
- 5 Christ our teacher and example, Matt. 11 : 28-30; Phil. 2 : 8; John 14 : 31.

QUESTIONS

- 1 How may we bring our thoughts into the captivity of obedience to Christ? II Cor. 10 : 5.
- 2 Explain Rom. 5 : 19.
- 3 Why must we obey either God or sin? Rom. 6 : 16.
- 4 What has suffering to do with obedience? Heb. 5 : 8; Ps. 119 : 71.
- 5 What may we learn from the example of Abraham? Gen. 22 : 18; Heb. 11 : 8.
- 6 What lesson do the Rechabites teach us? Jer. 35 : 6, 18, 19.
- 7 Is obedience to God easy or hard? Why? Matt. 11 : 28-30; I John 5 : 3; Ps. 40 : 8.
- 8 What results from disobedience? Gal. 6 : 7; Matt. 5 : 19.

- 9 Some good verses for children to learn, Prov. 30 : 17; John 15 : 12; I Pet. 1 : 14; Eph. 6 : 1; Rom. 13 : 9; I John 3 : 23; Col. 3 : 20; John 13 : 34.
- 10 Good for sentence prayers, Ps. 19 : 14; Ps. 51 : 15; Ps. 34 : 18; Ps. 27 : 1; Ps. 119 : 133; Ps. 25 : 7.

Let all repeat together Rev. 22 : 14

C. F. YODER

SERMON ECHOES

LOUIS S. BAUMAN

God's commands never battle his promises.

Eternity dwells in the heart of man.

Fear God, and you need fear nothing else.

The man who lives by faith is ever independent of feeling.

The devil never seeks a more advantageous position than in the tongue

There is plenty of new theology, but there is no new gospel.

What's there in a be-scribbled sheep-skin any way! 'Tis merit the world admires!

Snobs are proud of hair and trousers; noble men, of character and nobility.

Some men refuse to search for truth because they are afraid they will find it.

Often men think to have a quarrel with a preacher, when they are quarreling with God.

Death breaks the heavily barred door of the rich, as easily as the thin slatted door of the poor.

Roann. Ind

The Christian Life

He Hears

Thy thoughts are good, and Thou art kind,
E'en when we think it not;
How many an anxious, faithless mind
Sits grieving o'er its lot,
And frets and pines by day and night,
As God has lost it out of sight,
And all its wants forgot.

Ah, no! God ne'er forgets his own,
His heart is far too true!
He never seeks their good alone,
His love is daily new,
And tho' thou deem that things go ill,
Yet He is just and holy still,
And all things He can do.

The Lord is ever close and near
To those who keep His word;
Whene'er they cry to him in fear
Their prayer is surely heard;
He knoweth well who love Him well;
His love shall yet their clouds dispel,
And grant the hope deferred.

—Paul Gerhardt.

Buried Talents

Christian Advocate.

Only those who are not responsible for their actions on account of defective mental constitution are destitute of talents. When we speak of talented persons we usually refer to those who possess extraordinary gifts, but everyone who has any gift whereby he may do good is talented. We may do good with our hands, with our minds, with our influence, with our gifts of speech and song, with whatever genius we may possess, and with the position in which Providence has placed

us. We may not know whether our talent is great or small until we put it out to use. What seemed a small gift while unemployed may yield large results when properly invested. A physician who does not lay claim to literary genius wrote a simple article on "Toys," which was published in a periodical. It fell under the eye of a wealthy young lady who, up to that time, had never discovered that there was anything for her to do. That article awakened her to see that she could minister to the poor children of the city. She set about the work first by dressing beautiful dolls and carrying them to sick and poor children, and filled with sunshine many homes which had always been filled with shadows.

Talents are often buried In the parable of the talents our Lord represents the man who had received one talent as burying it, but we are not to infer that only one talent men bury their talents. Many ten-talent men do the same thing. If all the buried talents in the church could be exhumed and sent out on the mission for which God intended them, what a change would take place in the world!

Some talents are buried under the mountains of vice. In every city or town there is a record of young men who once possessed brilliant minds and great abilities who fell into the habit of using strong drink, and sank lower and lower until their friends lost respect for them, and finally their light went out in shame. Other talents are buried under mountains of worldly ambition. Some men achieve what is called success. They do not waste their talents in vice. They make fortunes and rise to fame. Yet they bury their talents because they do not put them to the use which God intended. No matter how brilliant one's career, nor how diligently he employs his time and improves his faculties, if he uses them for selfish ends, he will have a dark account to give at last. Talents are never properly employed unless they are used for some good end. It is not enough to be able to say that we have done no harm. It will not suffice to engage in legitimate occupations and prosecute them honestly. We must do the best we can for others as well as for ourselves. The man in the parable did no harm when he buried his talent. But he was justly condemned.

One buries his talent because he supposes that he has but one and that will not count for much. It will not gain much if invested, and the loss will be small if it is laid away. Others bury their talents because they are afraid. This is the excuse of the slothful servant in the parable. He knew his lord, and was afraid he might not be able to please him. Some persons have a horror of the rigid justice of God and the strict requirements of Christianity. Ask them to join the church and become Christians, and they will tell you they cannot live up to the required standard. They are afraid.

No man who buries his talents can live a happy life. The most unhappy people one meets are those who have abundance, but